

Welcome

to

Serenity

Welcome

to

Serenity

*All rights reserved. No part of this
book may be reproduced in any form,
or by any means, without permission
in writing from the publisher.*

©1973
Revised 1978
Serenity Publications
P. O. Box 137
Forest Knolls, California 94933

INTRODUCTION

This booklet has been written especially for those entering Serenity's doors for the first time, to briefly acquaint them with the broader concepts of Serenity's Living Light Philosophy, as well as to explain the format and the spiritual laws governing each portion of our church service.

We are gathered here in order that we may experience the peace that passeth all understanding. We encourage a state of receptivity, conceived as passive concentration without any goal-directed effort, any active interest or apprehensiveness. The process of Serenity is a conscious one. If one is quiet and listens to the inner spirit, the inner self, the God-self within, one will learn how purity of thought releases energy, how standards of honesty and selflessness release energy, and how the energy flows in accord with Divine Laws. We gather together to blend our energies to the Divine Flow.

Our purpose is to share demonstrable teachings that reveal beyond a shadow of a doubt that man, in truth, is the cause and the cure of all his experience. This philosophy, based on revealed laws governing the universe, demonstrates in practical daily application how man, through his electro-magnetic field, his planes of consciousness and his spheres of action, attracts all things in his life.

The religious aspect of Spiritualism is ecumenical and supported by demonstration, revelation, reason and emphasis on personal responsibility. Our religious life is an open process of creative experience and adventure. The universe provides a secure place in a plan for everyone, and the doorway to reformation is never closed against any human soul here or hereafter.

The cosmos is order, based on an original creative design (God) and its laws (Nature), by which it is fulfilled. These laws are “beyond the possibility of being changed,

suspended, transcended or destroyed”—Andrew Jackson Davis. The powers of order are accessible to all life forms that are in harmonic resonance. “For man, these are not powers over men’s minds or circumstances, but power over what is selfish and imperfect in the self.”—Davis

The American Spiritualist Church is descended from the life-teachings and words of Andrew Jackson Davis, a medium, healer, clairvoyant and freethinker who developed his philosophy about 1830. The theory of other planes of existence interlocked with the earthly plane and healing phenomena is a common heritage of the whole human family with tradition in religious literature of all continents.

“To know what is impenetrable to us really exists, manifesting itself as the highest wisdom and the most radiant beauty is the most profound emotion we can experience. It is the sower of true science.”—Albert Einstein

ORDER OF SERVICE

We open our services with a hymn. Joy expressed is energy released. The hymn is followed by the invocation, The Lord's Prayer. The importance of the spoken word with its life-giving energy is to unify, to awaken our consciousness to become receptive to the highest spiritual realms we can attract here, together. The spirit of man, as tunable to cosmic energy, is the creating, developing, expanding, beautifying, healing essence within the control of every human being. Our prayer is a form of communication demonstrating this concept. Our energies together are capable of bringing about a state of Divine flow in the consciousness of each person. This is the natural state of health. Peace, tranquility and full supply of energy are its attributes.

We offer together our Declaration of Principles so that our minds and our thoughts are supported by uniting on this level of awareness. We ask you to ponder

and reflect as you speak forth, to be aware of the meanings that are meanings for you.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

1. *We believe in Infinite Intelligence.*
2. *We believe that the phenomena of nature, both physical and spiritual, are the expression of Infinite Intelligence.*
3. *We affirm that a correct understanding of such expression and living in accordance therewith constitute true religion.*
4. *We affirm that the existence and personal identity of the individual continue after the change called death.*
5. *We affirm that communication with the so-called dead is a fact, scientifically proven by the phenomena of Spiritualism.*
6. *We believe that the highest morality is contained in the Golden Rule: "Whatsoever ye would that others should do unto you, do ye also unto them."*
7. *We affirm the moral responsibility of the individual, and that he makes his own happiness or unhappiness as he obeys or disobeys Nature's physical and spiritual laws.*
8. *We affirm that the doorway to reformation is never closed against any human soul here or hereafter.*
9. *We affirm that the Precept of Prophecy contained in the Bible is a Divine attribute proven through Mediumship.*

HEALING SERVICE

We offer healing service in our private chapel, where energy is fully concentrated by experienced spiritual workers through prior meditation and dedication. Those who do not wish to go to the healing chapel for direct contact with the spiritual healers may remain seated in the congregation and assist in sustaining higher levels of spiritual consciousness by being at peace.

Man lives on earth as a self-existent responsible being. This is why religious and psychological forces can be brought to bear upon common human misery. Those who are healed and helped are the subjects and not merely the objects of healing power. There is no recuperative power equal to a firm confidence in oneself, a respect for one's neighbor, and a profound gratitude for and love of life. These attitudes beget a buoyancy which sets every current of the body into healthful activity. True cure is in the discovery of our real nature as the recipient of the Divine Life.

DIVINE HEALING PRAYER

*I accept that the Divine Healing Power
Is removing all obstructions
From my mind and body
And is restoring me to perfect
Health, wealth and happiness.
My heart is filled with gratitude
For the Divine Law of Acceptance
That is healing both present and absent ones
Who are in need of help.
Peace, the power that healeth,
Is guiding my thoughts, acts and deeds,
As God and I go hand in hand
Living a life of joyful abundance.*

At the end of the healing services a list of names of those in need of healing is spoken forth into the atmosphere. Each of us becomes a living demonstration of the power of the word and the organizing forces of the universe to put things aright for those who cannot be with us. Our healing prayer is a declaration of truth, clearly stated, that our obstructions may be removed so that together we can be receptive. This places each of us on our highest possible spiritual consciousness, that our continuous thought and feeling of peace permits reflecting intelligent energy to flow harmoniously from us and through us.

LECTURE

Our hymn singing assists us in establishing joyful and harmonizing vibratory fields for our lecturer to receive his message.

Each of the lectures given here is, again, living

demonstration of levels that we as individuals can tap. By rule, no lectures are prepared in advance. All lectures are spontaneous.

Our lectures are an opportunity for each listener to demonstrate faith in the limitless Divine abundant flow brought forth by an attunement through dedication and meditation.

We stress the importance of daily meditation for all spiritually-minded people to develop purity of mind and detachment from the fret and fever of the world. Any reasonable technique for the restraint of the fluctuations of the mind, in seclusion, not to exceed twenty minutes a day, is recommended. Meditation is the stepping stone to the true mind of peace, the true harmony which gives access to Divine energy, freedom and serenity.

OFFERTORY: The Law of Giving is the Joy of Living.

Our children, at this time, attend the Children's Philosophy Classes. These are carefully programmed awareness classes.

In the spirit of joy, the choir sings to further raise the vibratory waves prior to Interdimensional Communication.

INTERDIMENSIONAL COMMUNICATION

"We have set it down as a law unto ourselves, to examine things to the bottom, and not to receive upon credit, or reject upon the improbabilities, until they have passed due examination."—Francis Bacon, 1608, one of the first writers to establish modern scientific thought.

"An alert science makes capital of mysteries. The psychical energy necessarily inferred has to be recognized as a real part of the integral human being."—J. B. Rhine

We offer interdimensional communication through those who are talented in clairvoyance and psychometry as a living demonstration that we all ARE SPIRIT; the mind and the body are adjuncts of form with which we have to work on the earthly plane.

The communicant, usually assisted by invisible spirit guides, acts as a telephone between dimensions, between different planes of consciousness. The thoughts we cultivate place us in rapport with corresponding spheres or planes of thought where kindly spirit helpers communicate as teachers or companions, not masters or gods to be worshipped. The communicant is being refined constantly as a receiving instrument. It is critically important, if one desires maximum meaningful messages, that one sustain one's thoughts on levels of light and love and truth, and one, then, will attract those levels. It is important to sit with one's feet flat on the floor, to observe silence and to be in joyful harmony with our fellow seekers.

Before the service you may have written a question or simply a request for guidance, at this time, from spirit helpers. These sealed billets can be answered as time allows, asking that those in the greatest need be served. When your billet is identified, it is necessary that you speak forth your response in a clear, firm voice, for the communicant operates on that life-giving energy that is the spoken word.

Our student communicants who are just unfolding their talents through service, need the support of the congregation, for they will receive and give forth from the predominant vibration of the recipient. It is important that we put our attention not upon the communicant, but direct our thought upward.

No communicant can command results. He can only give conditions and invite the aid of the spirits. From their dimensions the messages constantly inculcate ideals of honesty, reverence, selfless service, self-control

and tolerance without which no spiritual achievement is possible. To will good, to remove all pride and egotism—both are necessary for purest communication.

The style of the communicants is concise, clear, intelligible to all. They have the art of saying much in a few words. The spirits never command, they advise. They never have any but a serious and eminently useful aim. Receive your message and ponder it deeply.

Interdimensional communication is never an end in itself. What good is revealed must be applied to daily life. Those who, when seeing the phenomenon, become confused and awed are not finding its true purpose. Great joy and good will is generated as we open our lives to the light of universal love and guidance. We can identify with our neighbor and see us all AS ONE, each in his own way, experiencing help from other dimensions for the climb upward on the ladder of spiritual progression to fulfill our soul's purpose.

We end our services with a benediction and a short hymn, in joy.

SERENITY'S SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

As like-minded people grow stronger in their beliefs and clearer in their understanding, their spiritual adventure is furthered by learning together and joining in social activities.

Coming together helps us to become aware, feeling and using more power together than we can experience apart. Man is an identity being and by his very nature, must identify. The wise man chooses that wisely with which he will identify, for that is what he will become.

Serenity Church offers spiritual awareness classes (by advance registration only); monthly dinner parties; and weekly brunches following Sunday devotional services.

The classes are based on group study of *THE LIVING LIGHT*. In this book, gently taught in simple, direct language is a course of study and continuous inspirational and directive reading, for the study of the unfoldment of the spirit and psychical awareness, the Divine spark in every man. Cassette tapes are available of all spiritual awareness classes and the monthly church lectures given by Serenity's founder, Richard P. Goodwin.

We give to those who care to support that which supports them, an opportunity to do so. There is plenty of work to be done for those of you who care to volunteer your selfless service. We need office skills, organizing abilities, talents for sewing projects and many miscellaneous helper's positions. Serenity Church does all its own printing, bookkeeping and research into spiritual matters.

Serenity Association offers private counseling and private healing. Appointments for these, enrollments in

classes, and assignments for volunteers can be made after the service with any one of our church helpers.

Whereas the mind is an instrument which constantly absorbs information and affects the spiritual level of the absorber, we offer books and literature of many kinds as stepping stones of understanding for all levels of awareness. You may feel free to visit our book department before and after services.

SERENITY'S LIVING LIGHT PHILOSOPHY

Spiritualism is the *Science* (knowing through demonstration), *Philosophy* (love of knowledge and learning), and *Religion* (reverence necessary to live as purely and truly as we know how) of continuous life.

It teaches personal responsibility.

It demonstrates that death is not the end of life but a change of condition of the individual consciousness. It removes all fear of death, which is but a door to the loving spirit world.

It teaches that man is spirit and has a body and mind with which to work for his soul's purpose of gaining understanding here on earth. It teaches that man's spirit is the spark of Divinity which dwells in all living things.

It brings to the surface man's spiritual talents, such as inspiration, intuition, clairvoyance and healing powers.

It teaches that every spirit will progress through the ages to an unfoldment, sublime and glorious. It teaches us to be patient with ourselves and the world that is around us, for the earth is young in experience and the cycles of its development are far from complete. Patience

is the greatest wisdom. The spiritual life must be learned and earned.

It teaches that God is not one individual but all individuals. This Divine Intelligence is expressing through every form of life on the earth and in the etheric realms as well. We are individualizing within the God-consciousness which supplies generative power for the universe. This great play of life is unfolding so that the whole can know itself.

The Living Light is a practical philosophy with no special rules, dogma or rituals except the conscious ritual of living harmoniously and naturally, having our experiences and developing the beauty of our expression until we and all about us are in tune with the Infinite Consciousness, the Divine Light.

Serenity is beautiful in eternity, which is the moment of our awareness.

PASSAGES FROM THE TEACHINGS OF
RICHARD P. GOODWIN, FOUNDER OF
SERENITY SPIRITUALIST CHURCH

When we balance our thought with the soul faculties of reason, duty, gratitude, patience, and assurance, we are indeed free. Man thus finds, before his very eyes, his own divinity.

It is the Divine purpose of the soul's incarnation to gain understanding. For the moment you gain understanding you awaken your *self* from its sleep, from its slumber of satisfaction.

The life of the spirit is still higher than the life of the mind, and the only one which makes for the whole man.

One cannot understand what he does not express tolerance toward. Each time we express intolerance we give, from our very being, power to the thing we are not

yet able to tolerate. For that which disturbs us is that which controls us.

So-called evil and so-called bad is nothing more or less than undeveloped good.

We are indeed in creation; we are indeed a part of all things. Whatever we may like or dislike in another human being is also inside of ourselves. Tolerance is something that is inside of us. It is a recognition; it is a realization that we are all things.

In all your getting, get understanding. In all your giving, give wisdom.

Why are so few people joyous in this world? Only from lack of understanding themselves. Joy is an attitude of mind. It comes when we open the soul faculties and when we remember that we are, our soul, divine and that we do, indeed, have a purpose to serve.

Most important in unfolding on the spiritual path are the soul faculties of duty, gratitude and tolerance. Duty to what? Gratitude and tolerance to whom or what? It is very clear: duty to the only part of us that is eternal, not the form and not the flesh and not the thought, for these come and go—duty to that eternal spirit that is the true self; gratitude for the opportunity of its expression and tolerance for the levels within ourselves that are so difficult to grow through.

There is nothing more detrimental to the soul's awakening than the sleep known as satisfaction. The moment we permit ourselves to be satisfied, we stop striving to do better, and we are blinded to the soul's need to grow. Thus it is, the Divine Discontent.

Let us forget where we have been because as long as we put our attention there (attention is energy given), we will stay on that level of awareness and not see the light we are attracting at this moment. Only this

moment do we have. This moment is our eternity.

We are controlled and governed by the levels of awareness—these so-called invisible forces—that we choose to be in rapport with. Because we do not see those causes does not in any sense deny us of their effects.

Why is it that we are so ignorant to judge another, to judge the world when even God Himself does not judge us? What is within our form that thinks it is such a king, that it may rule all of God's creation, that it may dictate and declare what is right for the world? Is that the God you understand? If it is, think and ponder, it is such a limited one. It is indicative that your world is small and narrow and will not open to encompass God's Divine variety of expression.

If we awaken to the world of spirit within ourselves, then we will be able to go to that world of spirit, because

it does not exist outside if it does not exist inside this moment. We are in heaven now. We are not going to it and we are in that opposite place if that is what we choose. But we alone are making that choice. This moment is our eternal now. You are not preparing for all eternity; you are living in eternity now. You are not preparing for the spirit; you are spirit now.

Eternity is not a future state. You are living in eternity as much as you will ever be. The wise man knows he is eternal and acts accordingly.

Man's God is ever equal to his understanding. The wise man, recognizing and realizing that man is a law unto himself, asks himself the question, "Then, God, what am I doing with the law that I am?"

You want to be free. Then pause and think. Don't plead with God and beg Him for change when you are not willing to change yourself in this moment, the

only moment you have. God cannot effect in us anything that we are not receptive to.

How can we have joy when we deny joy to the rest of the world? How can we live in harmony through denial? If the light of the world is love expressed, why do you stumble in the dark?

We all have an emotional realm. We are the creators of it, God isn't. We all have to face it some day. Face it now—face our jealousies, our angers, our greeds, our envies and our spiritual laziness. We are a part of the human race and those functions are a part of our creation. Indeed, it is only an error of ignorance, but who among us is free totally of the errors of ignorance? Let us awaken within ourselves.

Serenity Association is not here to judge; it strives to help only those who are seeking, for unsolicited help is to no avail. None of the great teachers or philosophers

has said it is easy, but they have said it is simple, it is
beautiful, it brings joy and peace. Let us awaken
within ourselves.

NOTES:

